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ABSTRACT

A description is given of the Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education, an integral part of the Doctor of Education Degree Program at Mississippi State University. The broad goals of the course are as follows: (1) It provides doctoral-level students with the opportunity to develop informed positions on the major issues confronting education as a professional field, including appropriate scholarly resources to use in this process. (2) It provides the background needed by a professional educator, including information on external funding and various national associations, guidelines for preparing proposals for and writing a dissertation, administrative problem-solving, writing for publication, and curriculum change processes. (3) A focus on current issues and trends provides an understanding of and appreciation for the broad array of disciplines within the field of education. (4) Another objective of the course is to develop listening skills, improve oral and written communication, and enhance leadership skills. Conflict resolution and consensus building are also emphasized. A copy of the course syllabus and the course schedule are appended. (JD)

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PREPARING PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION VIA AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL SEMINAR

By

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Presented with

Arnold J. Moore, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Education
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Presented at
Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)
Summer Workshop
Starkville, Mississippi
August 7-10, 1988

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PREPARING PROFESSIONALS IN EDUCATION VIA AN INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL SEMINAR

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The Doctor of Education degree program at Mississippi State University is an interdisciplinary program in which the student's major is Education, with areas of program emphasis available in Agricultural and Extension Education, Counselor Education, Educational Administration and Supervision, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, and Vocational Education. All students in the program are required to take an interdisciplinary core of courses (23 semester hours). The interdisciplinary core is comprised of course work in research methods/design, statistics, philosophical foundations of education, psychological foundations of education, and a course entitled **Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education.** The focus of this paper is on the Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education.

Enrollment in the Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education is limited to doctoral-level students. The class meets once weekly for three hours. A team of four instructors are responsible for the course. Students are encouraged to take the course toward the end of the program of study. The instruction team includes the Dean of the College of Education, the Associate Dean of Instruction, the Associate Dean for Research and Development, and the Director of Graduate Education for the College, with the Director of Graduate Education serving as the Lead Instructor. The Lead Instructor is responsible for directing all course assignments, developing the schedule of activities (course outline), arranging for visiting speakers, and assigning course grades. (A copy of the course syllabus and the course schedule for the Spring semester of 1988 can be found in Appendices A and B.)

The overriding purpose of the Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education is to promote the professional development of the students in the Doctor of Education degree program. More specifically, the broad goals of the course are:

1. To provide students with the opportunity to develop informed positions on the major issues confronting education as a professional field, including appropriate scholarly resources to use in this process;

2. To provide students with additional insight into what being a professional in the field of education (or a professional educator) encompasses, including information about the purposes of various national associations, writing for publication, where to find information on external funding and the basics of how to write proposals for external funding, the characteristics/qualities that Deans of Colleges/Schools of Education perceive as most important when employing a professional educator, preparing proposals for and writing a dissertation, administrative problem-solving, the curriculum change process in teacher education, etc.;

3. To provide students with an understanding and appreciation of the broad array of disciplines within the field of education by focusing on current issues/trends in those disciplines and with knowledge about the specialized units within and closely related to the College of Education at Mississippi State University;

4. To develop skills in the following areas: (a) listening carefully, (b) oral and written communication, (c) conflict resolution, (d) consensus building, (e) serving in advocacy and adversary roles, and (f) effective educational leadership.

These four broad goals are broken down into a number of narrower, more specific objectives for the course. The specific activities/experiences provided in the course vary somewhat from semester to semester primarily

due to efforts made to take advantage of special resources that are intermittently available (such as visiting scholars, noted educational leaders at the state level, etc.) and due to efforts to cover the topical issues of most interest to the class members. To provide a better understanding of how the team attempts to accomplish these goals, a brief description of the activities/experiences related to several of the more specific objectives is provided in the next section, using the activities/experiences provided during the Spring of 1988 for illustrative purposes. (The objectives are identified by the numbers used in the attached course syllabus.)

Objective 3: To appreciate the importance of cultural diversity in our society and the aims of multicultural education.

Three activities/experiences were provided related to this objective. These were: (a) Presentations about their country's educational system by two of the international students (from Iran and Nigeria) enrolled in the class, and by another doctoral student from China; (b) a visit to the class (with opportunity for questions from the class members) of a delegation of educational leaders from China; and (c) a presentation on "Multicultural Education" by a visiting Phi Delta Kappa fastback author.

Objective 4: Be able to prepare a placement/credential file and locate information pertinent to securing employment as a professional in the field of education.

This objective is accomplished via one of the assignments required in the course--the preparation of a Professional Development Portfolio. One part of the Professional Development Portfolio is called Preparation for Employment. This is required for two purposes: (a) To get the student to explore and find out about employment opportunities in their field of specialization (such as salary range, work experiences required, placement

credentials requested, the average length of time between announcement of a position opening to credential-submission deadline and the average length of time between credential-submission deadline to starting date of employment, and whether positions tend to be concentrated in a particular geographical location); and (b) To assist the student in preparing a placement/employment file (that is, the student is required to prepare a resume, to write a letter of application, to write a letter requesting a letter of recommendation from a professional colleague, to prepare an outline for a seminar/class to be conducted during an interview visit, and to develop a list of questions to be pursued in an interview).

Objective 6: Be able to identify sources of external funding in the student's field and be familiar with the proposal-writing process.

This objective is accomplished via presentations on "Research and Development in the College of Education", a presentation made by the Associate Dean for Research and Development on "Tips on Writing Proposals for External Funding" and by a part of the **Professional Development Portfolio.** This part of the **Professional Development Portfolio** is called External Funding Sources. The student is required to submit copies of announcements of funding opportunities in the student's area of specialization from at least three federal sources and three philanthropic or private foundation sources.

Objective 7: Be familiar with the publication process/avenues in the student's area of specialization.

The Senior Researcher for the College of Education (one of MSU's Distinguished Professors) conducts a class on "Writing Professionally for Publication." He discusses the major journals/magazines in the field of education and how to determine appropriate avenues for publication, the

submission process, and editorial review guidelines. Part of the **Professional Development Portfolio** assignment is called Journal Guidelines for Manuscript Submission. The student is required to analyze the journals/magazines in the student's area of specialization and submit copies of the guidelines for the submission of manuscripts from at least four journals. The student must also write a paper to submit for publication in one of the journals/magazines in education. The manuscript is critiqued by three professors (with writing/publishing experience) and suggestions for improvement are provided. The student then revises the manuscript and must submit it to the selected journal. The student is graded only on the final version of the manuscript.

Objective 8: Be able to discuss with knowledge and intelligence the current developments and issues relevant to the preparation of professionals in the field of education.

There are a number of class periods devoted to activities related to this objective. These include presentations by the Dean of the College of Education on "Recent Developments in Teacher Education", "Report on the Holmes Group", presentations on "Teacher Burnout","AIDS Education", "State-Wide Competency Testing", "Current Issues in Educational Leadership" and "Writing for Thinking Project".

Objective 9: Appreciate the impact and importance of public policy development, state and national political influences on education, the electronic revolution, and other pertinent developments.

Activities related to this objective include presentations on: "Curriculum Change (in the College of Education)", "National Reports on Education", "Technology and Education", "National Organizations".

Objective 10: Understand what being a professional in the field of education involves.

Several activities already discussed relate to this objective, as well a presentation on "Becoming an Education Professional" by the Dean of the College.

Objective 11: Be able to solve problems related to personnel and curriculum in an interdisciplinary context.

Presentations by the Associate Dean for Instruction on "Curriculum Change" (with the Head of the Department of Music Education) and "Administrative Problem-Solving" relate to this objective.

Objective 12: Be able to approach the dissertation process in a systematic and organized manner.

A presentation by the Director of Graduate Education entitled "Tips on the Dissertation Proposal/Dissertation Process" deals with this objective.

Efforts to enhance the quality of the course are on-going. Each semester the students are asked to provide feedback to the instructors on the topics covered as well as on the presenters. (A copy of the Evaluation Form used during the Spring, 1988 semester can be found in Appendix C.) Based upon the feedback from the students, several changes in topics covered and presenters have been implemented. Formal as well as informal feedback from students has led to the following conclusions: (a) The course covers topics that are not covered in other courses in the doctoral program; (b) the course succeeds in "raising the Magnolia Curtain" of students from the State of Mississippi (that is, they become more concerned and interested in developments in education at the national level and gain a better understanding of how policies at the national level impact upon them as professional educators); (c) students specializing in agricultural and extension education, counselor education, and vocational education have less exposure to the topics covered than those specializing in elementary

education, secondary education, and school administration and supervision; and (d) students appreciate the editorial assistance provided on their manuscripts for publication (a substantial number of the articles written for the class have been accepted for publication).

In summary, **Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education** at Mississippi State University contains a number of unique features that could be easily adapted for inclusion in doctoral-level courses at other universities. Perhaps most importantly, it is a vehicle whereby doctoral students can be provided the opportunity to benefit directly from the expertise of college-level administrators who are actively involved in policy development in teacher education at the state, regional, and national level.

APPENDIX A

COURSE SYLLABUS

EDF 9353 Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education

Credit: 3 semester hours

Catalog Description:

Three lectures. A problem course considering accomplishments and needs in professional education as viewed from the interdisciplinary approach.

Objectives:

Upon completion of the seminar, the student should:

1. be able to compare and contrast the various disciplines within the field of education, with regard to the historical development, current concerns, future trends, and career opportunities in the disciplines.
2. be able to describe the distinguishing features and programs for special needs students.
3. appreciate the importance of cultural diversity in our society and the aims of multicultural education.
4. be able to prepare a placement/credential file and locate information pertinent to securing employment as a professional in the field of education.
5. have an understanding of professional concerns, such as affirmative action compliance, sexual harassment in the workplace, etc.
6. be able to identify sources of external funding in the student's field and be familiar with the proposal-writing process.
7. be familiar with the publication process/avenues in the student's field.
8. be able to discuss with knowledge and intelligence the current developments and issues relevant to the preparation of professionals in the field of education.
9. appreciate the impact and importance of public policy development, state and national political influences on education, the electronic revolution, and other pertinent developments.
10. understand what being a professional in the field of education involves.
11. be able to solve problems related to personnel and curriculum in an interdisciplinary context.
12. be able to approach the dissertation process in a systematic and ~~organized~~ manner.

Broad Goals of the Course

There are four major goals/purposes that the instructors of the Interdisciplinary Seminar in Education wish to accomplish. The variety of activities/experiences planned for the course were derived with these goals in mind:

(1) To provide students with the opportunity to develop informed positions on the major issues confronting education as a professional field, including appropriate scholarly resources to use in this process;

(2) To provide students with additional insight into what being a professional in the field of education (or a professional educator) encompasses, including information about the purposes of various national associations, tips on writing for publication, tips on where to find information on external funding and how to write proposals for external funding, information on the characteristics that Deans of Colleges/Schools of Education perceive as most important when employing a professional educator, tips on developing effective resumes, tips on writing dissertations, administrative problem-solving training, etc.;

(3) To provide students with an understanding and appreciation of the broad array of disciplines within the field of education by focusing on current issues/trends in those disciplines and with knowledge about the specialized units within and closely related to the College of Education at MSU;

(4) To develop skills in the following areas: (a) listening carefully, (b) oral and written communication, (c) conflict resolution, (d) consensus building, (e) serving in advocacy and adversary roles, and (f) effective educational leadership.

Assignments for Evaluation

1. Professional Development Portfolio

The Professional Development Portfolio will consist of three major parts: Preparation for Employment, Journal Guidelines for Manuscript Submission, and External Funding Sources.

Preparation for Employment--there are two purposes for this section of the Professional Development Portfolio. The first purpose is to get you to explore employment opportunities available in your field (without regard to mobility restrictions). The second purpose is to get you to develop an employment or placement portfolio to assist you in finding employment upon completion of your degree.

First, you should conduct a search of appropriate sources of employment opportunities in your field. Possible sources might be the Chronicle of Higher Education, APA Monitor, Educational Researcher, specialized journals in your field, job announcements in your department, etc. As part of this search, the student must consider the information through the University Placement and Career Information Center located in 315 Union. The student should include in the portfolio a photocopy of the position announcements located with the source of the announcement indicated for each. A subset may be provided if a large number of position announcements are located. The photocopies should be arranged in order of preference. Following the position announcements, indicate in a short paragraph whether the employment opportunities in your field tend to be concentrated in a particular geographical location.

Second, you should prepare your employment portfolio, including the following:

1. Salary range for applicants with your qualifications.
2. Work experience background required or preferred.
3. List of placement credentials typically required.
4. Letter of application for your first choice of positions available.
5. Letter requesting a letter of recommendation from a professional colleague (for the same position used in #4 above.)

6. Brief outline of presentation that you could present to a screening committee This should be on a topic that could appropriately to presented to a seminar or class. Include information about instructional or audio-visual aids that you would utilize with your presentation.

7. Average length of time between announcement of a position opening to credential-submission deadline, and average length of time between credential-submission deadline to starting date of employment.

8. List of questions/topics to be pursued by you--the applicant--in a job interview (for the same position as in #4 and #5 above).

9. Resume--prepared according to Ms. Reeves guidelines.

Journal Guidelines for Manuscript Submission--the purpose of this section of the Professional Development Portfolio is to get you to become familiar with the guidelines for manuscript submission of the journals in your field. In addition, after reviewing these guidelines, you are to select the one to which you will submit your manuscript. In some cases the journal will instruct the reader to write for specific guidelines or for more detailed guidelines. You are encouraged to do so, especially if the journal seems to be a promising one for articles in your particular field or area of interest. You should include guidelines from at least four journals in your field of study (i.e., photocopies of the guidelines).

External Funding Sources--the purpose of this, section of the Professional Development portfolio is to get you to become familiar with sources of information about external funding sources in your field. Both federal and philanthrophic or private foundation sources should be explored. Photocopies of announcements of availability of at least three funding sources from each type of source should be provided. The announcements must related to your area of emphasis or field of study. If it would be more beneficial to you to explore sources of external funding for graduate study or dissertation research than funding for R & D projects, you may direct your exploration in that direction. However, the emphasis should be on private sources of financial assistance rather than fellowships offered by particular universities.

While this aspect of the assignment may not seem especially relevant for you at this particular time, the relevance will become immediately obvious once you are employed, whether it abe in public schools or at the college or university level. Due to limited state funds, more and more emphasis is being placed upon seeking external funds for educational research and development. Knowledge of and interest in writing

proposals for external funding definitely will increase your attractiveness to prospective employers.

The Professional Development Portfolio will be due on March 3.

2. Manuscript for Submission for Publication

The purpose of this assignment is to get you involved in writing for publication and to assist you in developing your writing skills. The publication of one or two articles prior to graduation will greatly increase your attractiveness to a prospective employer and is a critical part of your professional development. If employed in higher education, your future tenure and/or promotions will depend to a large extent upon your publication record.

Your assignment is to write an article on any topic of interest (related to education and your field of study) according to the guidelines of the journal to which you decide to submit it. You are to develop an outline and a rough draft of your article by March 24. The article will be read by reviewers who will make suggestions for improvement. Please submit three copies of your outline, manuscript, and guidelines for submission of manuscripts from the appropriate journal on March 24. The final version of the manuscript will be due on April 28; only the final version will be graded.

Comments of the reviewers should be submitted with the final version of the manuscript as well as a copy of the letter to the editor that will accompany your manuscript.

The final version will be reviewed by at least one reviewer--Dr. Ruthven-- and others depending upon time available. Upon return of the manuscript, the student should make any additional changes deemed appropriate and follow through on submission of the manuscript. Please notify Dr. Ruthven as to the outcome of the manuscript submission.

3. Final Examination

The final examination will be a take-home, open-book examination. The examination may be a little different from others you have had in the past. Students enrolled in this course have found the take-home exam to be a valuable learning experience. The examination will be an exercise in applying, analyzing and synthesizing the information gained in class and in outside reading. It is expected that the examination will be an individual effort on your part. It is not to be a collaborative effort. More specifics about the examination will be given at a later date. The examination will be given to you on April 28, and will be due on May 12.

Each of the preceding assignments will count approximately one-third toward your final grade in the course. Borderline grades will be determined based upon consideration of your overt participation in class discussions.

At the end of the course, students will be asked to list the three most beneficial/relevant and the three least beneficial/relevant topics covered in the course. This information will be used to determine topics to be covered the next time the course is offered.

Text: No textbook will be required.

Bibliography:

The bibliography will be developed on an on-going basis. Presentors will submit a list of readings for students prior to their presentations.

The following will definitely be required:

National Commission for Excellence in Education. (1985). A call for change in teacher education. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (1983). Educating a profession: Profile of a beginning teacher. Washington, D.C.: same as author.

Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession. (1986) A nation prepared: Teachers for the 21st century. Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy. (Text of the Carnegie Report in Education Week, May 21, 1986.)

Holmes Group. (1986). Tomorrow's teachers. Holmes Group, Inc. (Text in The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 9, 1986.

ATE Blue Ribbon Task Force. (1986). Visions of reform: Implications for the education profession. Association of Teacher Education.

Phi Delta Kappan, Volume 68 (1), September, 1986, 18-42. (This issue of Phi Delta Kappan provides summaries of the Carnegie Report and Holmes Group Report as well as reactions to the two reports.)

Case, C. W., Lanier, J. E., and Miskel, C. G. (1986): Holmes group report: Impetus for gaining professional status for teachers. Journal of Teacher Education, 37(4), 36-43.

Tom, A. R. (1986). The Holmes report: Sophisticated analysis, simplistic solutions. Journal of Teacher Education, 37(4), 44-54. (The preceding two articles are a summary of the Holmes proposal and a critique of the proposal.)

Givens, Sharon (1986). Holmes group report gains praise, but stirs dissension. AACTE Briefs, 7(4), 1-6. (This article compares the Holmes proposal with AACTE positions.)

Hodgkinson, Harold L. (1986) Reform? Higher education? Don't be absurd! Phi Delta Kappan, 68, 271-174. (Discusses demographic trends that will force a change in higher education, according to Hodgkinson.)

McNett, I (Preparer) Demographic imperatives: Implications for educational policy. Report of the June 8, 1983, Forum on "The Demographics of Changing Ethnic Polulations and their Implications for Elementary-Secondary and Postsecondary Educational Policy."

Gollnick, Donna M. & Kunkel, Richard C. (1986). The reform of national accreditation. Phi Delta Kappan, 68, 310-314. (This article summaries the NCATE Redesign Plan.)

Watts, Doyle (1986). Four educators comment on the redesign of NCATE. Phi Delta Kappan, 68, 315-318.

APPENDIX B

EDF 9353
Spring, 1988
Course Outline

January 14--Orientation, Course Requirements, and Instroductions

Moderators: Ruthven, Vasek, and Wall

Assignment: Complete Current Issues in Education Questionnaire

January 21--Education Daily Handout; Becoming an Education Professional: National Organizations (AACTE, ATE, NCATE, AERA, etc.), Assessing Professional Opportunities, and Other Considerations--Arnold J. Moore, Dean of the College of Education

Assignment: Begin reading national reports on education.
A Call for Change in Teacher Education (National Commission for Excellence in Education)
A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education)
Time for Results: The Governors' 1991 Report on Education
Educating a Profession: Profile of a Beginning Teacher (AACTE)
Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group (text from The Chronicle of Higher Education)
A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy) (text from Education Week)
Visions of Reform: Implications for the Education Profession (Report of the ATE Blue Ribbon Task Force
Gollnick & Kunkel's and Watts' articles in Phi Delta Kappan on Holmes Group Report
Mississippi Education Reform Act of 1982: A Summary

January 28--Basics of Writing Professionally (for Publication)--Herbert Handley, Senior Researcher, Bureau of Educational Research and Evaluation

Moderator: Handley

February 4--Basics of Writing Proposals for External Funding: State, Federal, and Philanthropic--James Wall, Associate Dean for Research and Development

Moderator: Wall

Assignment: Read The Holmes Group Report information and A Call for Change in Teacher Education

February 11--Curriculum Change (in the College of Education--Richard Vasek and Jack Oliva, Head of Music Education
Administrative Problem-Solving--Richard Vasek

Moderator: Vasek

Febaruary 18--Research and Development in the College of Education

Presenters: Jim Wall--Bureau of Educational Research & Evaluation
Jim Shill--Research and Curriculum Unit for Vocational/Technical Education
Bill Graves--Rehabilitation Research & Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision
Ted Remley--Research & Training in Counselor Education

Moderator: Wall

February 25--Technology and Education

Presenters: Jasper Lee, Head of Agricultural & Extension Education, Technology, Agricultura and Education
Dan Brook, Assistant Department Head, Vocational Education and Technology, Technology, Industry and Education
David Morse, Professor of Educational Psychology, Technology, Testing and Education

Moderator: Wall

March 3--Teacher Burnout--Warren Housley, Professor of Counselor Education

Resume Preparation and References--Gloria Reeves, Director of Career Services Center

Moderator: Vasek

March 10--Multicultural Education--Violet Allain, PDK Fastback Author

Education in China--Changjiang Zhao, Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership

Education in Iran--Mohammed Chizari

Education in Nigeria--Michael Osaji

Moderator: Moore, Vasek, and Ruthven

March 17--Spring Holiday

March 24--AIDS Education--Donovan Horn, Acting Head of Physical Education, Health Education, and Recreation
Bob Collins--Physician at MSU Health Center

Moderator: Vasek

March 31--State-Wide Competency Testing--Jane Woodruff, Director of MSU Technical Support Unit, BERE

Tips on the Dissertation Proposal Process--Jan Ruthven

Moderator: Ruthven

April 7--Vist from Chinese Delegation of the MSU/China Consortium

Current Issues in Educational Leadership--Lamar Moody, Head of Educational Leadership

Moderator: Moore

April 14--Writing for Thinking Project--Sandra Burkett, Director of Writing/Thinking Project

Moderator: Vasek

April 21--Recent Developments in Teacher Education--Dean Moore

Moderator: Moore

April 28--National Reports on Education; Report on Holmes Group--Dean Moore

Moderator: Ruthven

May 5--Reading Day (No Class)

May 12--Final Examination Due

Moderators: Ruthven, Moore, Vasek, and Wall

APPENDIX C

EDF 9353 PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

Name(s) of Presenter(s) 1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Over-all Title or Topic of Presentation: _____

Please circle the appropriate response for each item:

		Presenter #1	#2	#3	#4
1.	The presentation was well-organized.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
2.	The presentation was relevant to my field of study.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3.	The material presented was timely and up-to-date.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
4.	The presentation was stimulating and thought-provoking.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5.	The material presented has been covered in other courses in my program of study.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
6.	I liked the presentation.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
7.	While not relevant to my career goals, the presentation was interesting and/or beneficial. NA	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
8.	I think a similar presentation by the same individual should be included in the course schedule in subsequent semesters.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9.	I think the topic of the presentation should be deleted from the schedule in subsequent semesters.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
10.	I think a similar presentation <u>by someone else</u> should be included in the course schedule in subsequent semesters.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

If you marked Yes, who would you suggest as presenter(s) in the future? _____

_____

11. How could the presentation be improved? _____

_____

_____

12. Other Comments: _____

_____

_____

Barbra Goodnite will be responsible for distributing copies of the evaluation form for each night's presentation(s); please return your evaluation to her prior to leaving class each night. Barbra has been granted permission "to nag, pester, and harass you" about completing and returning the evaluations. She has also agreed to keep all evaluation forms until after the assignment of grades for the course.

Thank you for your feedback; it will definitely be used for the purpose of improving learning and instruction in future semesters.